

## Sunday School

**EXCITING NEWS:** We are offering IN PERSON SUNDAY SCHOOL for our Toddler 2's - 6th Grade. These classes will be conducted right AFTER Holy Communion, every Sunday, for the remainder of the School Year!! Of course we understand that you may not be ready to return to church quite yet. For that reason we will continue to send out our VIRTUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL lessons every week.

We will not have classes for our 7th - High School students, but we do expect them to attend church in person or virtually, complete the weekly lesson on the Gospel Reading provided by Fr. Stavros, and attend GOYA meetings.

### CALENDAR FOR JANUARY:

**Sunday, February 7th:** The Hymns of the Orthodox

**Sunday, February 14th:** The 10 Commandments - The 2 Greatest Commandments **Wear RED Sunday**

**February 21st:** The Publican and Pharisee  
**Sunday, February 28th:** The Prodigal Son



# St. John's Greek Orthodox



# SUNDAY SCHOOL

# WORSHIP, THE DIVINE LITURGY & HOLY COMMUNION

## Seven Sacraments of the Orthodox Church

A Sacrament is a Holy Mystery of the Church, a physical sign which confers invisible Grace. There are seven Great Sacraments in the Orthodox Faith, but there are minor sacraments as well, and everything in the Church can be considered sacramental.



**Baptism** begins the Christian's life in the Church and unites him to Christ through His Death and Resurrection. Immersion is the preferred method of Baptism in the Orthodox Faith, and infant Baptism is the norm. Children are full members of the Church from their baptism forward.

*"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."*  
Matthew 28:19



**Eucharist, or Communion**, is the Sacrament which takes place during the Divine Liturgy and is the central Sacrament of the Orthodox Faith. During the Eucharist the prosphora (bread) and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ through the descent of the Holy Spirit upon them. The Orthodox Church practices a closed communion which is available to Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared themselves.

*"He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."* Luke 22:19-20



**Chrismation** is the sacrament through which the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon the Christian through anointing with Holy Chrism as it was upon the twelve Disciples at Pentecost through fire.

*"...He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."*  
II Corinthians 1:21b-22

**Priests and Bishops wear the epitrachelion** as a symbol of their priesthood. The seven crosses on an epitrachelion (one on the back and six on the front) represent seven sacraments of the church.



**Ordination** is the one sacrament which cannot be bestowed by the priest but which is bestowed upon him by the bishop. It sets the person aside for ministry in the Church and God's work. *"And when they had ordained them presbyters in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed."* Acts 14:23



**Marriage, or Matrimony**, is the Sacrament through which a man and a woman are joined forever before God. Mutual salvation and raising children are the goals of a Christian Marriage and the community of the family is to be an image of the Holy Trinity. *"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh so they are no longer two, but one flesh."*

*"Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."* Matthew 15:5-6



**Confession** is the Sacrament in which the sins committed after baptism are forgiven and we are reconciled to Christ; it renews the purity of the Christian's Baptism.

Different Orthodox traditions have different requirements as to the proper frequency of confession. *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*  
1 John 1:9



**Uction** is a Sacrament through which Orthodox Christians receive physical and spiritual healing by being anointed with oil. The service is often performed during

Holy Week, but private services for healing may be arranged with the priest. *"...let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven"* James 5:14-15



We hear about the Sacraments, and we know that they are part of our life in the church. But what more can learn about them?

The glossary of the Orthodox Christian Education Commission's student book, "The Way the Truth and the Life," does not offer a definition for "Sacrament." In that space, it simply says, "see Mystery." The Orthodox Study Bible's glossary agrees, listing the following definition for "Sacrament:" "Literally, a 'Mystery'. A Sacrament is a way in which God imparts grace to His people. Orthodox Christians frequently speak of seven sacraments, but God's gift of grace is not limited only to these seven—the entire life of the Church is mystical and sacramental..." (2. p. 1786) The following page explains more about each of the seven sacraments.